

EXHIBIT 24

PETER'S PENCE

Peter's Pence is the name given to the financial support offered by the faithful to the Holy Father as a sign of their sharing in the concern of Successor of Peter for the many different needs of the Universal Church and for the relief of those most in need.

At any time you can send your offering to

- His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, 00120 Vatican City State - Europe

Or, if you prefer:

- American Express
- VISA
- Diners
- MasterCard

Current Bank Account
UNICREDIT BANCA D'IMPRESA
IT/04/B/03226/03202/000005320965
CIN-B ABI-03226 CAB-03202
Account: 000005320965
Swift: UNCRIT2VRMX
Recipient: Obolo di San Pietro
(Please state your name,
your surname and your full address)

Notification may be sent by fax to the following number: (+39) 06.6988.3954

Please provide the name of the card holder, card number,
expiration date and amount.

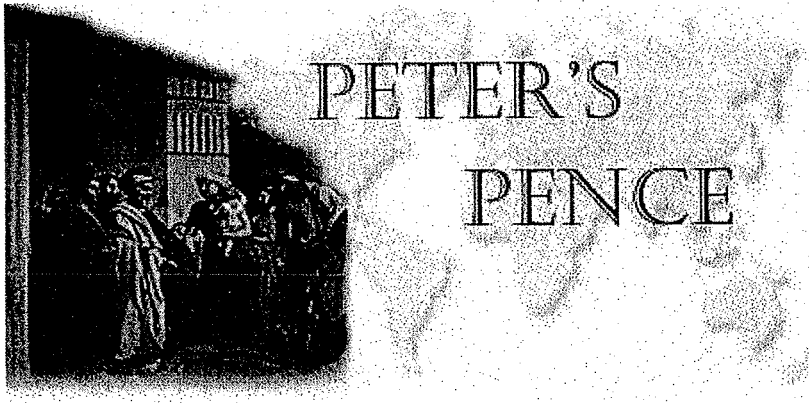
On-line donations

- Peter's Pence Today
- An ancient custom still alive today

For Further Information:
Peter's Pence Office
tel.: (+39) 06.6988.4851
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e-mail: obolo.sp@segstat.va



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Peter's Pence Today

In the first year of his Pontificate, Pope Benedict XVI stressed the proper meaning of this offering:

“Peter’s Pence’ is the most characteristic expression of the participation of all the faithful in the Bishop of Rome’s charitable initiatives in favour of the universal Church. The gesture has not only a practical value, but also a strong symbolic one, as a sign of communion with the Pope and attention to the needs of one’s brothers; and therefore your service possesses a refined ecclesial character”. (Address to the Members of the St Peter Circle, 25 February 2006).

The ecclesial value of this gesture becomes evident when one considers how charitable initiatives are connatural to the Church, as the Pope stated in his first Encyclical *Deus caritas est* (25 December 2005):

“The Church can never be exempted from practising charity as an organized activity of believers and, on the other hand, there will never be a situation where the charity of each individual Christian is unnecessary, because in addition to justice man needs, and will always need, love” (No. 29)

This aid is always animated by that love which comes from God:

“For this reason, it is very important that the Church’s charitable activity maintains all of its splendour and does not become just another form of social assistance” (...) “The Christian’s programme — the programme of the Good Samaritan, the programme of Jesus — is ‘a heart which sees’. This heart sees where love is needed and acts accordingly” (ibidem, No. 31).

Former Pontiffs have manifested their attention to the Peter’s Pence Collection as a form of support given by believers to the Successors of St Peter’s ministry to the universal Church. Pope John Paul II, for example, stated:

“You are aware of the growing needs of the apostolate, the requirements of the ecclesial

communities, especially in mission countries, and the requests for aid that come from peoples, individuals and families in precarious conditions. Many expect the Apostolic See to give them the support they often fail to find elsewhere.

In this perspective the Peter's Pence Collection is a true and proper participation in the work of evangelization, especially if one considers the meaning and importance of concretely sharing in the concerns of the universal Church" (Pope John Paul II to the St Peter's Circle, 28 February 2003).

The faithful's offerings to the Holy Father are destined to Church needs, to humanitarian initiatives and social promotion projects, as well as to the support of the Holy See. The Pope, being Pastor of the whole Church, is attentive to the material needs of poor dioceses, religious institutes and of faithful in grave difficulties (the poor, children, the elderly, those marginalized and the victims of war or natural disasters; concrete aid to Bishops or dioceses in need, Catholic education, assistance to refugees and immigrants, etc.).

The general criterion that inspires the Peter's Pence Collection is derived from the primitive Church:

"The primary source of support for the Apostolic See should be in offerings freely given by Catholics throughout the whole world, and by other persons of good will. This is in harmony with a tradition dating back to the Gospel (cf. Lk 10:7) and the teaching of the Apostles (cf. 1 Cor 11:14)" (Letter of Pope John Paul II to the Cardinal Secretary of State, 20 November 1982).



Let's help the Holy Father to help others!

Your contribution, however small, is important.

- o How to send your contribution to the Holy Father

- o An ancient custom still alive today

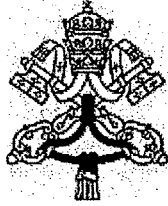
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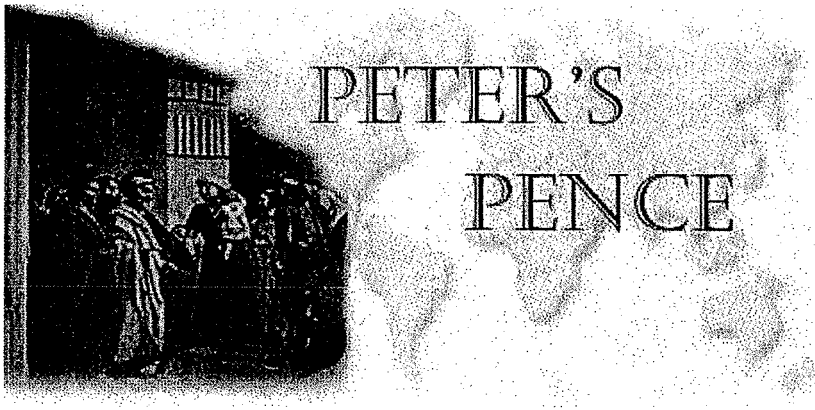
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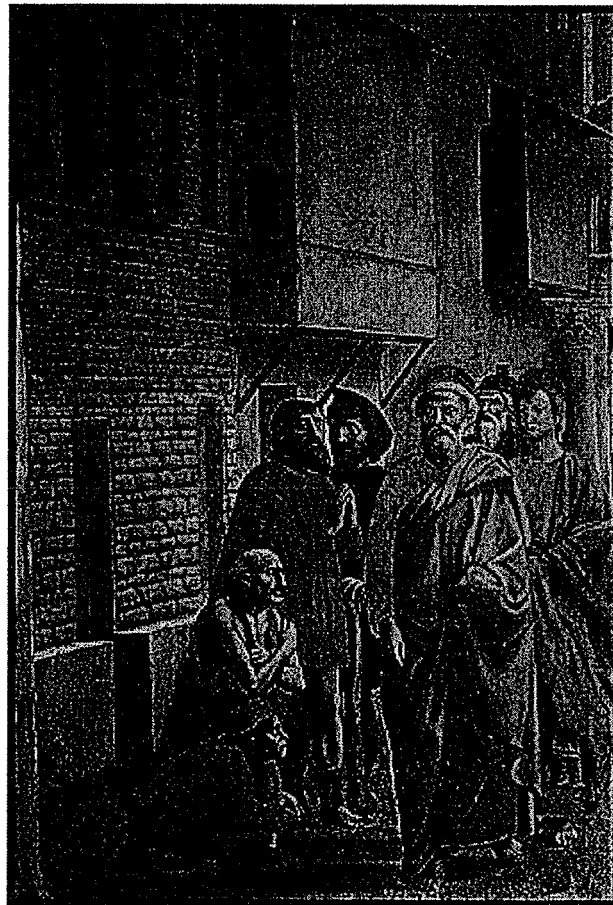
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The practice of providing material support to those charged with preaching the Gospel, thus enabling them to devote themselves completely to their apostolic mission and to care for those in greatest need, is as old as Christianity itself (cf. *Acts* 4:34, 11:29).



By the end of the eighth century the Anglo-Saxons felt so closely linked to the Bishop of Rome that they decided to send a regular annual contribution to the Holy Father. It was thus that the

Denarius Sancti Petri (Alms of Saint Peter) originated and spread throughout Europe.

Like other practices of its kind, this custom underwent many changes in the course of the centuries, until in 1871 Pope Pius IX gave it his approval in the Encyclical Letter *Saepe Venerabilis* (5 August 1871).

At present the collection is taken up throughout the Catholic world either on 29 June, the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, or on the Sunday closest to this Solemnity



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